

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

STRUCTURAL COMPOSITE HAVING DECORATED OUTER SURFACE AND METHOD OF MAKING THE SAME

Disclosed is a decorated structural composite element that includes, in its simplest form, a layer of composite material, a barrier layer disposed over the composite material layer, and a decoration atop the barrier layer. The barrier layer comprises an optically light pigment material, which is interposed between the decoration and the optically dark composite material. The optically light pigment material can be supported by the barrier layer, but it may also be carried by a layer which supports the decoration. The barrier layer may comprise a coating. Preferably, the layer that bears the decoration comprises a layer of woven or non-woven material, which most preferably is a polyester material. Resin is applied to the composite material and is cured to form a structural element. The composite structural element may be shaped before curing.